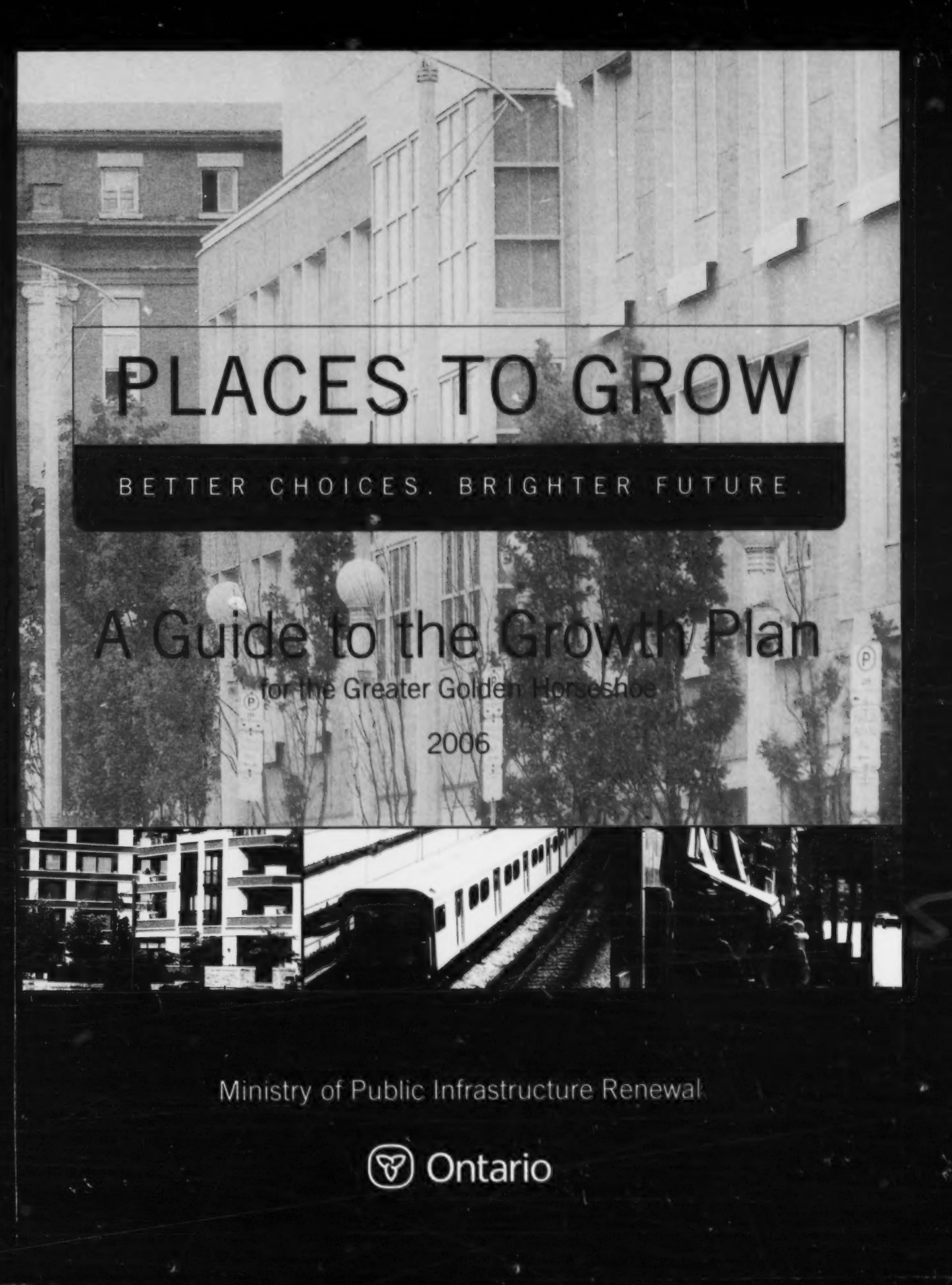




PLACES TO GROW

BETTER CHOICES. BRIGHTER FUTURE.

A Guide to the Growth Plan

for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

2006



Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal

 Ontario

The Facts About Growth:

► The Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) is one of the **fastest growing metropolitan areas** in North America.

► Almost two-thirds of Ontario's residents live in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. An **additional 3.7 million people** are expected to live in this area by 2031 bringing the total population of the GGH to 11.5 million.



► An **additional 1.8 million new jobs** are expected to be created in the Greater Golden Horseshoe by 2031.

Research About Growth Planning

Communities that support active living – biking, walking, transit use – are healthier.

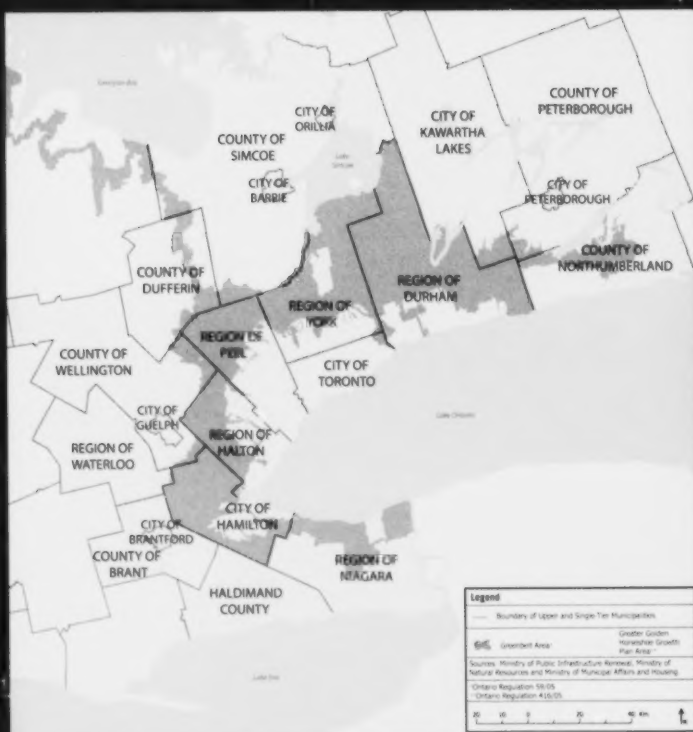
► People who live in communities that have a good range of jobs, shops and services within easy access to their homes **are more than twice as likely** to meet the recommended daily level of exercise and are less-likely to have weight problems, become obese or suffer from heart problems.

Places with more jobs located closer to each other have been linked to higher productivity and increased innovation.

► When employment density doubles, the number of patents per capita increases, on average, by **20 to 30 percent**.

Higher density communities offer better value for infrastructure investments – for all levels of government.

► It is estimated that building denser communities in the GTA would increase the efficiency of infrastructure investments by about **20 per cent** over 25 years.



Note: The information displayed on this map is not to scale, does not accurately reflect approved land-use and planning boundaries, and may be out of date. For more information on precise boundaries, the appropriate municipality should be consulted. For more information on Greenbelt Area boundaries, the Greenbelt Plan 2005 should be consulted. The Province of Ontario assumes no responsibility or liability for any consequences of any use made of this map.

A Vision for 2031

"Growth is important to Ontario's economy, but we need to be strategic about it. That's what the Places to Grow plan is all about: ensuring we have places to grow business; places to grow food; places to grow trees; places to grow families."

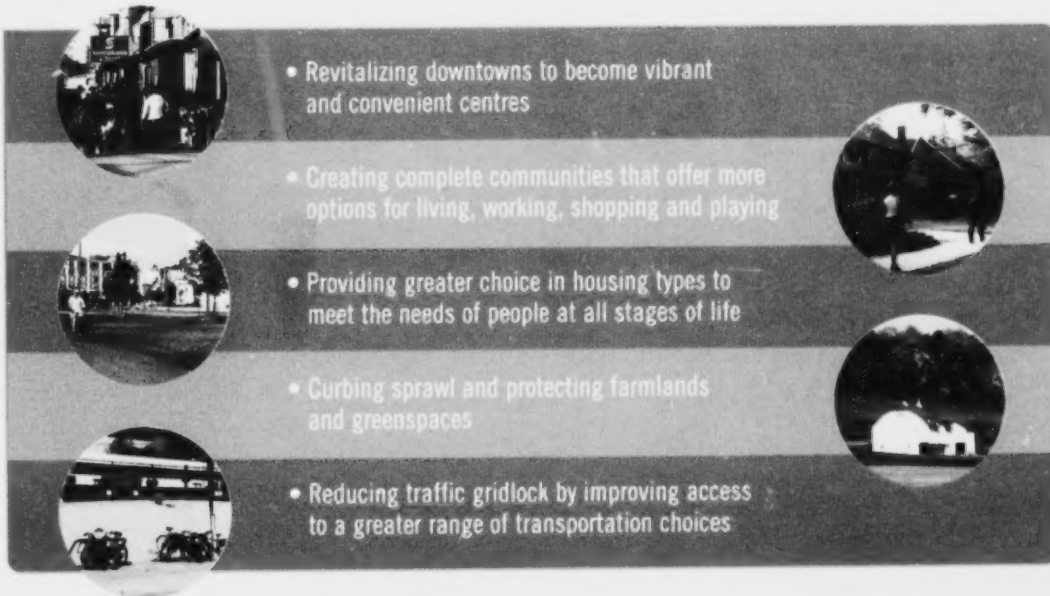
—Hon. David Caplan, Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal

The Government of Ontario has a vision for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. More than anything, the Greater Golden Horseshoe will continue to offer an exceptional quality of life. Its communities will be places where people want to live and where employers want to invest. The region will offer a wide variety of

choices for living, working and enjoying culture, and they will foster a culture of conservation. Getting around will be easy. The water will be clean, the air will be healthy and farmlands will have a productive role. The Greater Golden Horseshoe will be a place where residents enjoy living and have an exceptional quality of life.

Making the Vision a Reality

Through the Ontario government's Places to Grow initiative and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the government will achieve this vision by:



- Revitalizing downtowns to become vibrant and convenient centres
- Creating complete communities that offer more options for living, working, shopping and playing
- Providing greater choice in housing types to meet the needs of people at all stages of life
- Curbing sprawl and protecting farmlands and greenspaces
- Reducing traffic gridlock by improving access to a greater range of transportation choices

The Need for a Growth Plan

The Greater Golden Horseshoe is already the fastest growing urban region in Canada and the the third fastest growing urban region in North America. By 2031, we are expecting 3.7 million more people and 1.8 million more jobs. This growth is positive for the region. It can improve the quality of life in our communities and contribute to their prosperity and diversity. It can help maintain our standard of living. It can ensure we have the range of skilled workers necessary to continue to attract new investments and provide new opportunities. It can strengthen this region's position as the financial centre of the country and as an important centre of manufacturing, research, education, film and cultural industries, and agriculture.

To make sure we benefit from growth, the Greater Golden Horseshoe needs a plan. A plan that looks beyond the boundaries of any one municipality and covers the entire region, while still giving individual municipalities the flexibility they need to meet their own priorities. A plan that will make a difference for people.



The current sprawling development patterns in the GGH are adversely affecting Ontario's competitive potential, hurting the economy and damaging our health, environment and quality of life. People are traveling longer distances to work and spending more time commuting. More automobiles are on the roads. Pollution is

increasing. Gridlock is worsening. Goods are not getting to their destinations on time. Valuable agricultural lands and greenspaces are being paved over. People are driving more and walking less. Obesity levels are up. Continuing current development patterns would only exacerbate these problems.

Studies by the Heart & Stroke Foundation, the Ontario College of Family Physicians and the Ontario Medical Association link car-dependent communities to decreasing levels of physical activity and a subsequent increase in obesity rates, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, childhood asthma and other health conditions. They show that people who live in communities that have a good range of jobs, shops and services within easy access to their homes are 2.4 times more likely to meet the recommended daily level of exercise and are less likely to have weight problems, become obese or suffer from heart problems.

Studies also show that higher density communities provide better value for our infrastructure investments, for all levels of government. For example, the costs of servicing denser communities in the GTA would be about 20% less over the next 25 years.

Vibrant places with higher employment densities better attract knowledge workers and have been linked to higher productivity and increased innovation.

The Government of Ontario recognizes that the time to act is now. This growth plan will shape how our communities grow – as attractive and vibrant places which attract people and jobs, while fostering a culture of conservation in Ontario that will protect both human and environmental health.

Laying the Groundwork

Planning for growth means understanding the factors that shape our communities...

Consultation

Since the inception of the Places to Grow initiative, the government has sought ongoing input and feedback from experts, practitioners and the public. The government has released a series of documents: the Places to Grow discussion paper (July 2004), the Draft Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (February 2005), and the Proposed Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (November 2005).

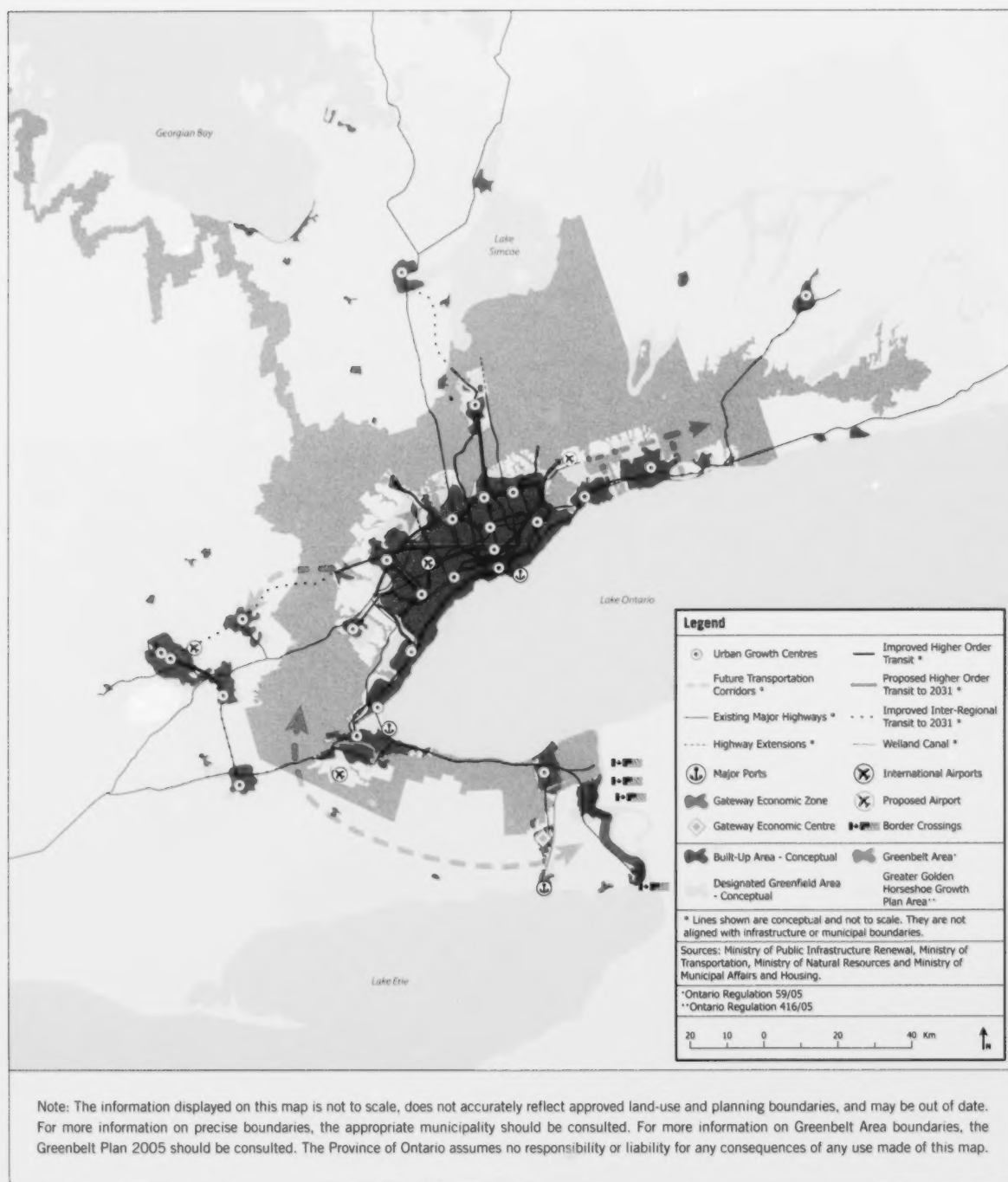
Broad consultations have resulted in extensive input from thousands of citizens and organizations in the municipal, business, development, environmental, planning, community, transportation and health sectors – and more than 1,000 written submissions.

Research

The Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal has undertaken and reviewed extensive research – worldwide and locally – into factors influencing growth and the impacts of poorly planned growth. The work of more than 200 international jurisdictions and studies from Ontario groups such as the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, the Urban Development Institute and Ontario Nature have provided valuable insight into best practices of growth planning. Some of this research, along with a number of technical papers that supported the development of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, are available at www.ontario.ca/placestogrow.



GGH Places to Grow Conceptual Map



Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

The Plan sets out a framework to provide overall leadership and guidance to municipalities as they plan for growth in their communities.

The Growth Plan has four major sections:

1	2	3	4
WHERE AND HOW TO GROW • Growth Forecasts • Managing Growth • General Intensification • Urban Growth Centres • Major Transit Station Areas and Intensification Corridors • Employment Lands • Designated Greenfield Areas • Settlement Area Boundary Expansions • Rural Areas	INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT GROWTH • Infrastructure Planning • Transportation – General • Moving People • Moving Goods • Water and Wastewater Systems • Community Infrastructure	PROTECTING WHAT IS VALUABLE • Natural Systems • Prime Agricultural Areas • Mineral Aggregate Resources • A Culture of Conservation	IMPLEMENTATION • Places to Grow Act, 2005 • Implementation Analysis • General Implementation and Interpretation • Coordination • Monitoring and Performance Measures • Public Engagement

The following pages provide an outline of the concepts, rationale and principles of some of the key policy directions in each of these sections to assist in understanding the Growth Plan.

1

Getting it Right: Where and How to Grow

The Growth Plan outlines a number of policies to shape the communities of the Greater Golden Horseshoe in a more complete and livable form. The objective is to develop communities with a better mix of housing, jobs, shops and services in close proximity.

Under the Plan's policies, a significant portion of new growth over the next decade and beyond will be accommodated in existing urban areas, such as downtowns, abandoned areas along major roads and around transit stations. By incorporating more complete and transit-friendly designs in our communities, existing urban lands will be able to accommodate more growth, reducing the development pressure on natural areas and farmlands.



ELEMENTS OF THIS APPROACH:

- ▶ Understanding growth patterns through comprehensive growth forecasts;
- ▶ Creation of mixed-use, transit-supportive, pedestrian-friendly communities;
- ▶ Protection of employment areas for future job creation;
- ▶ Improved regional and local transit systems;
- ▶ More complete community development in new suburban areas; and
- ▶ Making sure sufficient land is available for future development.



Improving Growth Forecasts: Building a Common Understanding

With 3.7 million new people and 1.8 million new jobs forecasted to come to the Greater Golden Horseshoe by 2031, it is necessary for the province and all GGH municipalities to have a common understanding of where this growth is expected to occur.

The provincial government has worked with municipalities across the region to develop a consistent and coordinated set of growth forecasts for population and employment for the Greater Golden Horseshoe that will enable us to plan for growth in a coordinated fashion. These forecasts are contained in Schedule 3 of the Growth Plan and will be reviewed at least every five years as new Census data becomes available.

Intensification: Getting Better Use Out of Our Urban Lands

Intensification makes more efficient use of land by accommodating new growth within existing urban areas. Intensification is key to revitalizing city centres, making them more people-focused and livable. It breathes new life into our downtowns. For example, redeveloping abandoned buildings into functioning, attractive uses can provide more housing, shopping, and job opportunities. Providing more attractive options for people to live in these areas also helps to steer development pressures away from natural areas and farmlands. A better concentration of people and jobs not only adds vibrancy and social activity to the area, but also makes infrastructure to service the area more affordable.

To support the revitalization of our communities, the Growth Plan lays out a phased approach for increasing intensification in the Greater Golden



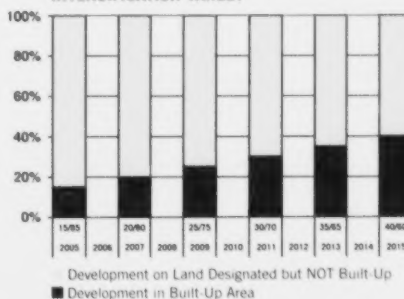
Before



After

Horseshoe. By the year 2015 (and every year after), all regions, counties, and single-tier municipalities – such as Barrie and Hamilton – will accommodate a minimum of 40 per cent of each year's new residential units within their already built-up urban areas. Recognizing that one size does not fit all, municipalities will develop their own policies and phasing strategies to achieve this target in a way that will respect and complement the community's character. This policy, as well as other policies in the Growth Plan, sets out the standards for municipal planning while ensuring that municipalities have the flexibility to manage how they apply the Plan's policies locally.

EXAMPLE OF HOW TO APPLY THE 40 PER CENT
INTENSIFICATION TARGET





Urban Growth Centres: Vibrant Places for People to Live, Work and Play

The importance of downtowns has long been recognized. They provide a sense of place and history for communities in the region.

Building on the work undertaken by municipalities to recognize the important role of these areas, the Growth Plan identifies 25 centres in the Greater Golden Horseshoe as Urban Growth Centres.

These centres are not all at the same stage of development. Some are the downtowns of older cities, which provide tremendous opportunity for redevelopment of abandoned areas, while others are new suburban centres. As a result, the density targets vary depending on the growth and transit potential for each centre (see box).

The Growth Plan identifies density targets for these centres to make sure they can accommodate a minimum number of people



and jobs, within easy access to a broad mix of shops and services, and can support accessible transit over the lifespan of the

Plan. They will be revitalized as community focal points, centres of culture and recreation, and economic growth generators attracting new talent and investment that also support the economy of the surrounding area.

The Province will work with municipalities to identify the scale and scope of each urban growth centre. Detailed mapping of their boundaries will be the responsibility of municipalities.

GGH Urban Growth Centres (Visualization of density targets)



150 PEOPLE AND JOBS COMBINED PER HECTARE BY 2031

Downtown Barrie
Downtown Brantford
Downtown Cambridge
Downtown Guelph
Downtown Peterborough
Downtown St. Catharines



200 PEOPLE AND JOBS COMBINED PER HECTARE BY 2031

Downtown Brampton
Downtown Burlington
Downtown Hamilton
Downtown Kitchener
Uptown Waterloo
Markham Centre
Downtown Milton
Mississauga City Centre
Newmarket Centre
Midtown Oakville
Downtown Oshawa
Downtown Pickering
Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway
Vaughan Corporate Centre



400 PEOPLE AND JOBS COMBINED PER HECTARE BY 2031

Downtown Toronto
Etobicoke Centre
North York Centre
Scarborough Centre
Yonge-Eglinton Centre

Employment Lands: Ensuring Jobs for the Future

The Greater Golden Horseshoe is the economic engine of Canada. To ensure that this region's economy continues to grow, we have to plan ahead and ensure that we have sufficient employment areas available for our future needs. These areas will be protected from conversion to other uses. Under the Growth Plan, municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe will maintain an adequate supply of lands to support a variety of employment uses. In particular, the availability of large tracts of land designated for clusters of business operations in key locations is an essential element to support future economic growth.

The Growth Plan also calls for major office and institutional development to be located in areas with frequent or higher order transit services – either already in place or planned – so that commuters are provided with more transportation choices.



Designated Greenfield Areas: Building Better Suburbs



While a key objective of the Growth Plan is to revitalize our urban areas, making them more livable and attractive, new development will also continue

to occur in non-urbanized areas, known as Designated Greenfield Areas. These are lands that municipalities have identified and approved for future development but have not yet been built upon. Today they still look mostly like rural lands.

New development in these areas will be planned to create complete communities, with development patterns that support walking, biking, transit services, parks and a mix of housing and jobs. In addition, the Growth Plan sets a density target for Designated Greenfield Areas of 50 people and jobs combined per hectare. This density allows for a mix of housing types – singles, semis, townhomes, and apartments. This density will also help to ensure that existing greenfield lands, already designated for growth, will be able to accommodate growth long into the future.





Urban Boundary Expansion: Managing City Growth



A large supply of land is already designated for future urban development in the GGH.

Through increased intensification, higher densities and more mixed-use development, the Growth Plan will ensure lands are available for growth long into the future.

However, bringing new lands into the urban envelope will be necessary. The Growth Plan outlines a series of tests and criteria to ensure

that expansions occur when necessary and where most appropriate, and that they are well-planned for infrastructure and the protection of our natural environment.

Rural Areas: Supporting and Protecting the Rural Economy

The vitality and economic well-being of rural communities is important to the future of the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The Growth Plan recognizes the role of small towns and villages as centres of economic, cultural and social activity by encouraging municipalities to promote a variety of economic activities in rural communities.

Infrastructure to Support Growth



Attracting new investment to the Greater Golden Horseshoe is important to the economic success of this region. To attract investment, we

need infrastructure that is modern and reliable. The Growth Plan outlines a number of policies aimed at maintaining our competitiveness by providing an efficient transportation network, clean water, hospitals, parks and schools.

With two-thirds of Ontario's current population, plus the projected growth expected in the Greater Golden Horseshoe over the next 25 years, this region's infrastructure needs are substantial. The government's multi-year infrastructure investment plan includes more than \$8.3 billion for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Transportation: Moving People and Moving Goods

The GGH transportation system will be planned to increase the variety of options available for traveling to get to different destinations, including convenient access to transit, cycling and walking opportunities.

Through *ReNew Ontario*, Ontario's five-year strategic infrastructure investment plan, more than \$7.5 billion will be invested to improve infrastructure in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). The 2006 Budget announced additional investments of \$838 million for new transit investments through *Move Ontario*.

As well, municipalities will be expected to integrate walking and cycling opportunities into their transportation planning. Our communities will be built with the densities necessary to sustain this transit investment and support more vibrant, physically active lifestyles.

Similarly, making it easier to get our goods to market is critical for our economy. Under the Plan, linking the Greater Golden Horseshoe to the border and linking inter-modal facilities are priorities.

To implement the transportation initiatives identified in the Growth Plan, the Government of Ontario has introduced legislation to establish a Greater Toronto Transportation Authority to plan, coordinate and set priorities for a seamless transportation system.



► Over the past 30 years, Ontario's population has grown by 170 per cent, while the number of trips by car has increased by 300 per cent.

► Numerous studies have concluded that higher transit ridership correlates to greater overall economic success and a higher standard of living.

Water and Sewer Systems

Historically, investments in sewers, water treatment plants and other water infrastructure have lagged behind growth. Investment is required to bring aging infrastructure into a good state of repair and to accommodate new growth. The Growth Plan includes policies to link planning for water and sewer systems with planning for growth.

The province is matching its infrastructure investment priorities with the goals and objectives of the Growth Plan. More than \$8.3 billion will be invested to improve infrastructure in the Greater Golden Horseshoe over the next five years.

Community Infrastructure



Hospitals, long-term care facilities, affordable housing, parks and

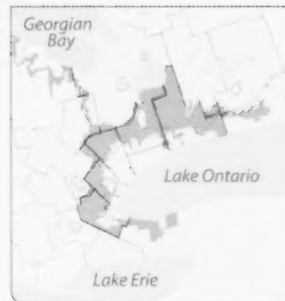
schools are some of the important facilities that help support the quality of life for people in any community. Often, community infrastructure has not been incorporated into the planning process for communities. The Growth Plan includes policies to link planning for community infrastructure with planning for growth.

3

Protecting What is Valuable

The Greater Golden Horseshoe is blessed with unique natural areas and cultural heritage sites, valuable natural resources, and high quality agricultural lands.

Fundamental to the Growth Plan is an understanding that water, energy, and clean air are vital resources that need to be conserved and protected for use now and in the future. The Growth Plan includes steps to foster a culture of conservation in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Municipalities will develop and implement Official Plan policies and other strategies in support of conserving water and energy, protecting air quality, reducing waste and preserving cultural heritage.



The Greenbelt (see page 17) is a cornerstone of our natural system. The Growth Plan outlines a process through which the province

will work with municipalities and other stakeholders in areas outside the Greenbelt to identify natural systems and prime agricultural areas and, where appropriate, develop additional policies for their protection.

The Growth Plan also encourages municipalities and others to develop a system of open space and trails.





The Greenbelt Plan

The 1.8 million-acre Greenbelt, established by the Government of Ontario in 2005, protects environmentally sensitive natural heritage and agricultural lands in the Golden Horseshoe.

The Greenbelt:

- ▶ Ensures that the environment remains healthy and able to support people and wildlife now and into the future.
- ▶ Strengthens vibrant rural communities within the Greenbelt, and ensures that growth is focused in cities and towns outside the Greenbelt.
- ▶ Supports agriculture as a source of commerce, jobs and food production.
- ▶ Provides outdoor recreational and other leisure opportunities to support the needs of our rapidly expanding population.

Implementation

Successful implementation will require that all levels of government, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and Ontario citizens work together to implement the policies of the Growth Plan and realize its goals.

Legal Status

In June 2005, the Places to Grow Act became law. The Act enables the government to designate growth plan areas across Ontario and develop growth plans. The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe is the first growth plan to be approved under the Act. The Act requires all specified planning decisions to conform to the policies of the Growth Plan.

Government Investment

The government is using its financial investments to support this strategic initiative. Under *ReNew Ontario* – Ontario's multi-year infrastructure investment plan – and *Move Ontario* – the government's 2006 budget

GOVERNMENT ACTION: COMPREHENSIVE, INTEGRATED, COORDINATED

Inter-Governmental Action Plan

Recent efforts in Simcoe County, Barrie and Orillia are an example of the provincial government's leadership in working with municipalities. The province and municipalities have been working together for the past two years to develop long-term, balanced solutions to ensure that these communities grow sustainably. This inter-governmental action plan, involving all municipalities in the Simcoe County area in gathering information and developing workable solutions, is indicative of the cooperative, inclusive approach envisaged by the Growth Plan.

GROWTH PLANNING IN ACTION

Waterloo Growth Management Strategy

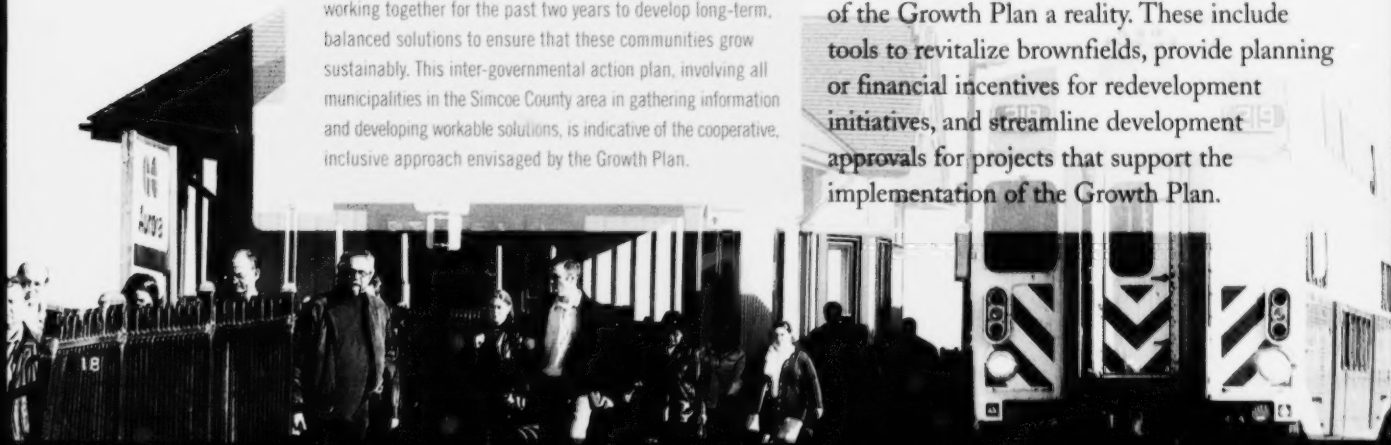
The Region of Waterloo's Regional Growth Management Strategy was adopted as an overarching framework to help guide Regional decision making over a 40-year planning horizon. It seeks to focus growth, build on past accomplishments, attain financial stability, and achieve more compact, transit, and pedestrian-oriented development. Key strategy elements identified are big-picture environmental planning, a firm countryside line, reurbanization, transportation choice, targeted greenfield development, and quality of life initiatives.

The Strategy integrates a vast cross-section of Area Municipal, Regional, and other stakeholder actions, including many that typically fall outside the scope of conventional land-use planning.

investment in transit, roads and bridges – the province has committed to investing in better transit services, quicker movement of goods, and clean, safe water, to support the implementation of the Growth Plan. More than \$8.3 billion is being invested to improve infrastructure in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Additional investments in a variety of sectors including education, will substantially increase the total infrastructure investments in the region.

Planning and Fiscal Tools

A variety of tools have also been put in place or are being developed to help make the vision of the Growth Plan a reality. These include tools to revitalize brownfields, provide planning or financial incentives for redevelopment initiatives, and streamline development approvals for projects that support the implementation of the Growth Plan.



Next Steps

The government is committed to developing complete and livable communities where people want to live and employers want to invest – from revitalizing downtowns into vibrant, prospering and socially attractive areas to building complete suburbs that offer options for living, working, shopping and playing. While the Growth Plan outlines the policies to achieve these goals, implementation will require further analysis on some key items, development of monitoring tools, and engaging the public in the process.

Further Analysis

The Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal will undertake further analysis in a number of areas, such as defining built boundaries and urban growth centres. Analyses will also be undertaken at a sub-area level – any area larger than one municipal or regional boundary – on some key implementation issues.

Monitoring

Monitoring and performance measures are an important part of any successful venture. Growth planning is no different. The government will develop a set of indicators to measure the Growth Plan's implementation and to ensure it is making real progress for people and their communities.

Involving the public

The people in the Greater Golden Horseshoe are stewards of their communities and will play a key role in the implementation of the Growth Plan. The government will be working with partners to build the public's understanding of growth management and facilitate involvement in the implementation of the Growth Plan. Municipalities will also be encouraged to engage residents in local efforts to implement the Growth Plan.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS: Working together to build complete communities

West Don Lands

The West Don Lands is a priority area for early action in the renewal of Toronto's central waterfront. As a partnership among the Government of Canada, the Province of Ontario and the City of Toronto, revitalization work was launched on March 27, 2006. This is the first major sustainable community in Toronto in years on land owned by the Ontario government. This 32-hectare area is within walking distance of downtown, is right next to the Distillery District and has strong connections to the St. Lawrence and Corktown neighbourhoods. Key elements include:

- 6000 new residences, including 1500 units of affordable housing
- 25% of community to be parks and public space, including the eight-hectare Don River Park
- New light rail transit (LRT) line within a five-minute walk of all homes
- Two childcare centres
- Community centre and pool
- Elementary school

GET INVOLVED

Planning for growth means carefully looking ahead and better informing our actions. It's a partnership among all of us.

To get a copy of the Growth Plan, please visit the website below.

You can also contact the Ontario Growth Secretariat,
Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal
at 777 Bay Street, 4th Floor
Toronto, ON M5G 2E5

TEL: 416-325-1210 or 1-866-479-9781

FAX: 416-325-7403

EMAIL: placestogrow@pir.gov.on.ca

WEBSITE: www.ontario.ca/placestogrow

This Guide was developed to assist participants in the land-use planning process in understanding the Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Plan. The information in the Guide should not be relied upon in place of legal or professional advice in connection with any particular matter. The Growth Plan should be consulted for specific policies.